



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 4  
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER  
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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

JUN 8 2000

Editor  
The St. Petersburg Times  
490 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

Dear Editor:

Your June 6, 2000 article discussed community concerns regarding EPA representatives who attended the June 5<sup>th</sup> National Ombudsman' hearing at the Tarpon Springs City Hall, made a presentation, answered questions, and departed. The meeting, sponsored by Congressman Michael Bilirakis, was held to address concerns expressed by the local community regarding the cleanup of the Stauffer Chemical Company Superfund site. I would like to clarify EPA's attendance and participation in the meeting.

EPA received a written invitation from Congressman Bilirakis to attend the June 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and discuss revisions made to the Consent Decree and Scope of Work for the cleanup of the site. We were requested to make a 10-minute formal presentation. EPA discussed the meeting format with Congressman Bilirakis' staff prior to the meeting and it was our understanding that EPA would make a presentation at the beginning of the meeting to explain the revisions, answer questions, and then depart.

EPA representatives made the presentation, answered questions by the EPA Ombudsman (although none were related to the presentation) and departed, as there were no questions from the community members. Although your paper reported EPA's departure, you failed to provide the substantive contents of the EPA's remarks regarding the Amended Consent Decree. I believe the remarks made were important because they explain a number of important actions EPA is taking at the site to address concerns raised by the community and the state. The changes are as follows:

- **Changing the cleanup standard for arsenic in soils to 3.7 mg/kg:** EPA will require a alternate cleanup standard for arsenic contamination at the site. EPA will enforce a cleanup standard of 3.7 parts per million, which is the state's industrial commercial cleanup standard. EPA also will place deed restrictions on the property prohibit the site being used in the future for residential use.
- **Clarifying the requirement to test the site for potential sinkhole formation:** EPA will require Stauffer to conduct extensive geophysical studies to determine the probability of sinkhole formation beneath the Site and the ability of the underlying geology to support the selected remedy.

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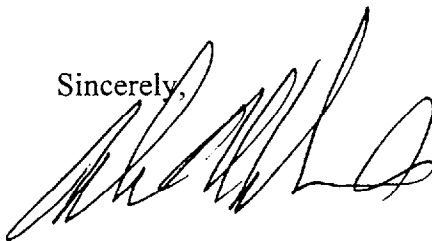
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- **Adding the requirement to conduct tests for the remedy:** EPA will require Stauffer to conduct treatability studies to ensure the effectiveness and long-term protectiveness of the in-situ solidification/stabilization remedy.
- **EPA will expedite negotiations with Stauffer to conduct a focused Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for groundwater characterization:** Although not part of the Amended Decree, EPA will specifically require that the RI/FS thoroughly investigate the groundwater in the surficial and Floridian aquifers beneath the Site.

EPA has held numerous community meetings to discuss the cleanup of the site and respond to community concerns. In addition, EPA Region 4 has participated in two previous public meetings conducted by the EPA Ombudsman and Mr. Kaufman. As stated earlier, the purpose of Monday's meeting was to discuss the revisions to the Consent Decree and Statement of Work (as requested by Congressman Bilirakis) but Mr. Kaufman instead focused on issues from the previous Ombudsman meetings that EPA had already fully addressed.

EPA is firmly committed to selecting and implementing a remedy that protects human health and the environment. EPA believes that the remedy proposed for the site is protective and will maintain long-term reliability. Further, EPA is firmly committed to working cooperatively with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the community to provide maximum opportunity to review and comment on documents, plans and strategies related to cleanup and remediation of the site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. Hankinson, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

John H. Hankinson, Jr.  
Regional Administrator